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Secretary for
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California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Los Angeles Region

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Gray Davis
Governor

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Elizabeth Erickson
Associate Engineering Geologist, TMDL Unit 2

DATE: April 7, 2003

SUBJECT: Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL
Notice Of Public Hearing And Transmittal of
Tentative Basin Plan Amendment

On October 24, 2002, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) adopted an amendment to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region* (Basin Plan) to incorporate a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to reduce chloride loading to the Upper Santa Clara River. On February 19, 2003, the California State Water Resource Control Board remanded the TMDL to the Regional Board for revision of the TMDL implementation plan (Resolution No. 2003-0014). A public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, June 5, 2003 at 9:00 A.M., at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, 700 North Alameda Street, Board Room, Los Angeles, where the public will have opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the implementation plan.

A copy of the Tentative Resolution with the revised implementation plan, is included and posted on the Regional Board's web page. The Staff Report for the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL, which has not been modified, is also available at the web address; <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/html/meetings/tmdl/tmdl.html>. Please contact Elizabeth Erickson at 213-576-6683 or Sam Unger at 213-576-6784 with questions or to request additional copies of the staff report and related materials.

Oral presentations should be summarized in writing to the extent possible. Time limitations on presentations may be imposed. In order to review and to assess comments, the Regional Board staff must receive written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 22, 2003. Comments should be submitted to:

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region
320 West 4th Street, suite 200
Los Angeles California, 90013

ATTN: Elizabeth Erickson

California Environmental Protection Agency

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Background

The Regional Board's goal in preparing the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is to reduce chloride levels in the Upper Santa Clara River so that the River can continue to be used for Agricultural Supply and to eliminate the risk of future impairments that may be associated with aquatic life and rare and endangered species. Chloride has been associated with reduced crop yields for salt-sensitive crops such as avocados and strawberries which are grown in the Lower Santa Clara River watershed and irrigated with water from the Santa Clara River. Chloride at concentrations above 230 mg/L has been shown in experimental studies to cause chronic effects in freshwater aquatic species.

The Regional Board is charged with implementing the provisions of both the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California law) and the federal Clean Water Act in the Los Angeles Region. Section 303(d)(A)(1) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires the Regional Board to identify water quality limited segments within the Region (i.e., those water bodies not attaining water quality standards), and establish TMDLs for the pollutants causing the impairments. A TMDL specifies the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards, and allocates the acceptable pollutant load to point, non-point and natural sources. The TMDL can be expressed in terms of either mass per time, toxicity, concentration, or other appropriate measures.

Analysis of the extensive chloride monitoring data collected from POTW effluents and within the Upper Santa Clara River has consistently shown that chloride concentrations exceed the water quality objective. The Regional Board staff has prepared this TMDL to address the documented chloride water quality impairments in two reaches of the Santa Clara River near the Los Angeles/Ventura County line.

The TMDL establishes a phased plan for reducing the loading of chloride to the Santa Clara River. It also sets forth a number of studies, including one to consider a site-specific objective for chloride in the Upper Santa Clara River, if appropriate. The purpose of this TMDL is to remove the chloride water quality impairments that prevent the Upper Santa Clara River from supporting the agricultural beneficial use. This TMDL establishes an implementation plan to reduce the sources of chloride from households and industries that discharge to the Upper Santa Clara River through the Saugus and Valencia WRPs, and if necessary, construct a chloride removal system to treat the WRP effluent before discharge to the Santa Clara River.

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